

Vendors must have an active, approved master contract under the SITE program and be approved in the category or categories listed in the RFO document in order to respond to and RFO. Vendor is responsible for reading all addenda associated with the RFO.

IT Professional Technical Services

SITE Program

T#:14ATM

Request for Offers (RFO) For Technology Services

Office of MNIT Services partnering with the Minnesota Department of Education

Project Title: Longitudinal Data System

Category: Quality Assurance

Business Need

MNIT @ Education is looking for a single vendor to supply an experienced quality assurance expert to work with the project managers on the various projects.

The Department of Education received grand funding multiple enhancement projects for the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System (ECLDS) and the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDs). The interagency warehouse contains anonymized unit record data for individuals from birth to workforce employment that will support education research. The data is drawn from multiple resources Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Minnesota Office of Higher Education (OHE), and Minnesota Department of Economic Development (DEED). All work will be directed by MNIT @ Education project managers.

The Early Learning Real Time Data Warehouse has completed development of the first iteration build of the warehouse. Quality Assurance still needs to be completed on this first iteration. The second iteration will add additional data sources and create scheduling capabilities for frequent data refreshes which will need to be tested to ensure data quality.

Project Deliverables

- Test the data marts and reports for the Early Childhood Longitudinal Data System (ECLDS) and the Statewide Longitudinal Education Data System (SLEDs)
- Perform complex QA/Testing tasks working with the development team during testing.

Project Milestones and Schedule

- Anticipated Project Start Date: February, 2018
- Anticipated End Date: February, 2019
- The State will retain the option to extend the work orders in increments determined by the State.

Project Environment

- The selected Resource will work directly with MNIT Services staff.

Project Requirements

- The selected Resource will be required to:
 - Work in a Microsoft operating system environment.
 - Have senior level skills in Microsoft SQL Server.
 - Have skills in information systems software testing, quality assurance and quality control of application software and systems.
 - Follow quality assurance methodology to develop test plans and test cases.
 - Work with quality assurance team to follow best practice and standards.
 - Work in compliance with Statewide Project Management Methodology as directed and be required to report or demonstrate such compliance as needed
 - All work and resulting products must comply with the Minnesota Accessibility Standards. Information about the Standard can be found at [MN Accessibility Standards](#).

Responsibilities Expected of the Selected Vendor Resource

- The selected Resource will be required to:
 - Provide frequent documentation and status updates through MNIT @ Education's project managers.
 - Work with MNIT @ Education's Quality Assurance team to follow agency standards on documenting test results.
 - Provide input and track against the project work plan.
 - Work with the appropriate resources to define and write Functional and Technical Testable Requirements (Waterfall) and/or User Stories and Acceptance Criteria (Agile).
 - Work with the State's QA Supervisor and/or QA Lead to create the Level of Effort (LOE) estimate for all testing activities within the project.
 - Work with Business Analyst, Developers, and DBA's in defining and writing detailed and reusable Functional, System Integration, and Regression test cases.
 - Document all defects in the defect tracking tool in an accurate manner.
 - Escalate all challenges to the appropriate resource(s) within 24 hours.
 - Communicate effectively both verbally and in writing.
 - Attend the Defect Review meetings.

Mandatory Qualifications

To be initially scored as pass/fail. Thereafter, proposals where the resource(s) meets the Mandatory Qualifications will be scored in part on the extent to which the resource(s) exceeds these mandatory minimums. See RFO Evaluation Process, below.

- Vendor must propose an hourly rate at or below vendor's Max Hourly Rate for the category.
- 5 years' experience writing complex SQL queries.
- 2 years' experience with automated testing.
- 1 engagement with testing on mobile technologies.
- 1 year experience in accessibility testing.
- B.S. or B.A. degree (4 year) OR Associates degree (2 year) with seven (7) years' experience as a Quality Assurance Analyst.
- 1 engagement working in a public sector environment (i.e., Federal, State, County, City, or Municipality government).
- American Society for Quality (ASQ) Certification or equivalent quality assurance certification from accredited organization or degree program with focus on quality assurance.

Desired Skills

- Experience in K-12 education, health, human services, higher education, workforce, and/or labor data and research.
- Experience in coaching or team development situations.
- Experience with student data.
- Experience estimating QA work effort and developing test strategies, test plans, traceability matrices, test cases, and final quality assurance reports.
- Experience writing and executing SQL query commands and experience with data warehouse, data mart, XML, data mappings (transformations), data model, source data, application services, datasets, data analytics, data reports, data packages, and cubes.
- Experience with defect management, defect resolution, and affiliated toolsets.
- Experience with multiple concurrent QA projects.
- QA instruction or mentoring experience.

Process Schedule

Process Milestone	Due Date
Deadline for Questions	01/30/2018; 2:00 p.m. Central Time
Anticipated Responses to Questions Posted	01/31/2018

Process Milestone	Due Date
Proposals Due	02/05/2018; 2:00 p.m. Central Time
Anticipated proposal evaluation complete	02/08/2018
Anticipated work order start	02/12/2018

Questions

Any questions regarding this Request for Offers should be submitted via e-mail according to the date and time listed in the process schedule to:

Name: Leah Wilhelmy, Contract Manager, MNIT Services

Email Address: mnit.contracts@state.mn.us

Questions and answers will be posted via an addendum to the RFO on the Office of MNIT Services [website](#) according to the process schedule above.

Other persons ARE NOT authorized to discuss this RFO or its requirements with anyone throughout the selection process and responders should not rely on information obtained from non-authorized individuals. If it is discovered a Responder contacted other State staff other than the individual above, the responder's proposal may be removed from further consideration.

RFO Evaluation Process

Criteria	%
Desired Skills	20%
Candidate Experience and Mandatory Qualifications	50%
Cost	30%

The State reserves the right to interview any or all proposed resources. In the event interviews are conducted, technical scores may be adjusted based on additional information derived during the interview process. The State further reserves the right to remove a resource from consideration if the resource is unavailable for interview as requested by the State.

The State also reserves the right to contact proposed resources' references and to adjust technical scores based on additional information derived from the reference checks.

This Request for Offers does not obligate the state to award a work order or complete the assignment, and the state reserves the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest.

Submission Format

The proposal should be assembled as follows:

1. Cover Page

- Master Contractor Name
- Master Contractor Address
- Contact Name for Master Contractor
- Contact Name's direct phone/cell phone (if applicable)
- Contact Name's email address
- Resource's Name being submitted

2. Overall Experience:

1. Resume identifying the Mandatory Qualifications – to be clearly noted in the response matrix - i.e. minimum pass/fail requirements, including companies and contacts where the resource has demonstrated the mandatory qualification as previously noted. If pass/fail requirements are not met further scoring of the proposal will be discontinued. Please complete the matrix below.
2. Resume identifying any Desired Qualifications.
3. Also include the name of one reference who can speak to the resources work on a similar project. Include the company name and address, reference name, reference email, reference phone number and a brief description of the project this resource completed.

RESPONSE MATRIX	Resource Name:
MANDATORY QUALIFICATIONS:	Provide Dates and Company Name where the resource has demonstrated the qualification; or identify how the resource meets the requirement (Yes/No is not sufficient)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 years' experience writing complex SQL queries. 	

RESPONSE MATRIX	Resource Name:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 years' experience with automated testing. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 engagement with testing on mobile technologies. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 year experience in accessibility testing. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B.S. or B.A. degree (4 year) OR Associates degree (2 year) with seven (7) years' experience as a Quality Assurance Analyst. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 engagement working in a public sector environment (i.e., Federal, State, County, City, or Municipality government). 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Society for Quality (ASQ) Certification or equivalent quality assurance certification from accredited organization or degree program with focus on quality assurance. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If resource being submitted is working under a subcontract agreement, responder must identify each subcontractor. 	
DESIRED SKILLS:	Provide Dates and Company Name where the resource has demonstrated the skill (Yes/No is not sufficient)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject matter expertise in K-12 education, health, human services, higher education, workforce, and/or labor data and research. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience in coaching or team development situations. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with some of the data sources. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience estimating QA work effort and developing test strategies, test plans, 	

RESPONSE MATRIX	Resource Name:
traceability matrices, test cases, and final quality assurance reports.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience writing and executing SQL query commands and experience with data warehouse, data mart, XML, data mappings (transformations), data model, source data, application services, datasets, data analytics, data reports, data packages, and cubes. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience with defect management, defect resolution, and affiliated toolsets. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience with multiple concurrent QA projects. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> QA instruction or mentoring experience. 	

3. Cost Proposal

Include a **SEPARATE DOCUMENT** labeled “Cost Proposal” which includes the name of each resource being submitted and their corresponding proposed hourly rate.

4. Additional Statement and forms:

1. Conflict of interest statement as it relates to this project
2. [Workforce Certificate Information](#) (required if vendor proposal exceeds \$100,000, including extension options)
3. [Equal Pay Certificate](#) (required if vendor proposal exceeds \$500,000, including extension options)
4. [Affidavit of non-collusion](#)
5. [Certification Regarding Lobbying](#) (required if vendor proposal exceeds \$100,000, including extension options)

The STATE reserves the right to determine if further information is needed to better understand the information presented. This may include a request for a presentation.

Proposal Submission Instructions

- Vendor is limited to submission of one (1) resume/candidate in response to the Request for Offers
- Response Information: The resume and required forms must be transmitted via e-mail to:
 - Leah Wilhelmy; Mnit.contracts@state.mn.us

- Email subject line should read: MDE Longitudinal Data System QA RFO#
- Submissions are due according to the process schedule previously listed.
- All responses are time and date stamped by the State's email system when they are received. Responses received after Proposals Due Date above will not be considered. The State shall not be responsible for any errors or delays caused by technology-related issues, even if they are caused by the State.
- Vendor must copy MNIT.SITE@state.mn.us on any responses submitted for this RFO. Vendors that do not intend to submit a proposal must send an email notification of a no-bid on the request to MNIT.SITE@state.mn.us. Failure to do either of these tasks will count against your program activity and may result in removal from the program.

General Requirements

Proposal Contents

By submission of a proposal, Responder warrants that the information provided is true, correct and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential award of this work order. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award as well as subject the responder to suspension or debarment proceedings as well as other remedies available by law.

Liability

In the performance of this contract by Contractor, or Contractor's agents or employees, the contractor must indemnify, save, and hold harmless the State, its agents, and employees, from any claims or causes of action, including attorney's fees incurred by the state, to the extent caused by Contractor's:

- 1) Intentional, willful, or negligent acts or omissions; or
- 2) Actions that give rise to strict liability; or
- 3) Breach of contract or warranty.

The indemnification obligations of this section do not apply in the event the claim or cause of action is the result of the State's sole negligence. This clause will not be construed to bar any legal remedies the Contractor may have for the State's failure to fulfill its obligation under this contract.

Disposition of Responses

All materials submitted in response to this RFO will become property of the State and will become public record in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, section 13.591, after the evaluation process is completed. Pursuant to the statute, completion of the evaluation process occurs when the government entity has completed negotiating the contract with the selected vendor. If the Responder submits information in response to this RFO

that it believes to be trade secret materials, as defined by the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. § 13.37, the Responder must: clearly mark all trade secret materials in its response at the time the response is submitted, include a statement with its response justifying the trade secret designation for each item, and defend any action seeking release of the materials it believes to be trade secret, and indemnify and hold harmless the State, its agents and employees, from any judgments or damages awarded against the State in favor of the party requesting the materials, and any and all costs connected with that defense. This indemnification survives the State's award of a contract. In submitting a response to this RFO, the Responder agrees that this indemnification survives as long as the trade secret materials are in possession of the State.

The State will not consider the prices submitted by the Responder to be proprietary or trade secret materials.

Conflicts of Interest

Responder must provide a list of all entities with which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work that is contemplated in this request for proposals. The list should indicate the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict.

The responder warrants that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, and except as otherwise disclosed, there are no relevant facts or circumstances which could give rise to organizational conflicts of interest. An organizational conflict of interest exists when, because of existing or planned activities or because of relationships with other persons, a vendor is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the State, or the vendor's objectivity in performing the contract work is or might be otherwise impaired, or the vendor has an unfair competitive advantage. The responder agrees that, if after award, an organizational conflict of interest is discovered, an immediate and full disclosure in writing must be made to the Assistant Director of the Department of Administration's Office of State Procurement ("OSP") which must include a description of the action which the contractor has taken or proposes to take to avoid or mitigate such conflicts. If an organization conflict of interest is determined to exist, the State may, at its discretion, cancel the contract. In the event the responder was aware of an organizational conflict of interest prior to the award of the contract and did not disclose the conflict to OSP, the State may terminate the contract for default. The provisions of this clause must be included in all subcontracts for work to be performed similar to the service provided by the prime contractor, and the terms "contract," "contractor," and "contracting officer" modified appropriately to preserve the State's rights.

IT Accessibility Standards

All documents and other work products delivered by the vendor must be accessible in order to conform with the State Accessibility Standard. Information about the Standard can be found at <http://mn.gov/mnit/programs/policies/accessibility/>.

Preference to Targeted Group and Economically Disadvantaged Business and Individuals

In accordance with Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1810, subpart B and Minnesota Rules, part 1230.1830, certified Targeted Group Businesses and individuals submitting proposals as prime contractors will receive a six percent preference in the evaluation of their proposal, and certified Economically Disadvantaged Businesses and individuals submitting proposals as prime contractors will receive a six percent preference in the evaluation of their proposal. Eligible TG businesses must be currently certified by the Office of State Procurement prior to the

solicitation opening date and time. For information regarding certification, contact the Office of State Procurement Helpline at 651.296.2600, or you may reach the Helpline by email at mmdhelp.line@state.mn.us. For TTY/TDD communications, contact the Helpline through the Minnesota Relay Services at 1.800.627.3529.

Veteran-Owned Small Business Preference

Unless a greater preference is applicable and allowed by law, in accordance with Minn. Stat. § 16C.16, subd. 6a, the Commissioner of Administration will award a 6% preference in the amount bid on state procurement to certified small businesses that are majority owned and operated by veterans.

A small business qualifies for the veteran-owned preference when it meets one of the following requirements. 1) The business has been certified by the Department of Administration/Office of State Procurement as being a veteran-owned or service-disabled veteran-owned small business. 2) The principal place of business is in Minnesota AND the United States Department of Veterans Affairs verifies the business as being a veteran-owned or service-disabled veteran-owned small business under Public Law 109-461 and Code of Federal Regulations, title 38, part 74 (Supported By Documentation). See Minn. Stat. § 16C.19(d).

Statutory requirements and certification must be met by the solicitation response due date and time to be awarded the preference.

Foreign Outsourcing of Work Prohibited

All services under this contract shall be performed within the borders of the United States. All storage and processing of information shall be performed within the borders of the United States. This provision also applies to work performed by subcontractors at all tiers.

Work Force Certification

For all contracts estimated to be in excess of \$100,000, responders are required to complete the Affirmative Action Certificate of Compliance and return it with the response. As required by Minnesota Rule 5000.3600, "It is hereby agreed between the parties that Minnesota Statute § 363A.36 and Minnesota Rule 5000.3400 - 5000.3600 are incorporated into any contract between these parties based upon this specification or any modification of it. A copy of Minnesota Statute § 363A.36 and Minnesota Rule 5000.3400 - 5000.3600 are available upon request from the contracting agency."

Equal Pay Certification

If the Response to this solicitation could be in excess of \$500,000, the Responder must obtain an Equal Pay Certificate from the Minnesota Department of Human Rights (MDHR) or claim an exemption prior to contract execution. A responder is exempt if it has not employed more than 40 full-time employees on any single working day in one state during the previous 12 months. Please contact MDHR with questions at: 651-539-1095 (metro), 1-800-657-3704 (toll free), 711 or 1-800-627-3529 (MN Relay) or at compliance.MDHR@state.mn.us.

Certification of Nondiscrimination (In accordance with Minn. Stat. § 16C.053)

The following term applies to any contract for which the value, including all extensions, is \$50,000 or more: Contractor certifies it does not engage in and has no present plans to engage in discrimination against Israel, or

against persons or entities doing business in Israel, when making decisions related to the operation of the vendor's business. For purposes of this section, "discrimination" includes but is not limited to engaging in refusals to deal, terminating business activities, or other actions that are intended to limit commercial relations with Israel, or persons or entities doing business in Israel, when such actions are taken in a manner that in any way discriminates on the basis of nationality or national origin and is not based on a valid business reason.